

# The Greatest Showman Script

## SCENE 1 (THEATER)

(The greatest show music)

(BARNUN starts to sing together with his allies)

**BARNUN:** ladies and gentlemen! Cads and crooks! Children of all ages! Welcome to another world!  
Where beauty walks with danger! Where the impossible is commonplace! And where nothing  
is quite what you expect....\*throwing his head back, arms wide\* welcome... to the greatest s  
show on earth!

(crowds on wild effect)

Barnum turns to watch the show with them. Sounds fade as Barnum, in a brief moment, sings to himself  
about the long road it took to get here. In counterpoint to the Performers exuberant singing, Barnum's  
words are reflective and wistful.

BARNUM is yanked out of his reverie by the Performers. Jolted back to reality, he joins their spirited  
song again.

**BARNUM:** Ladies and gentlemen, tonight we offer you a story. A parable, if you will. Of a man caught  
between the real world and the world of his dreams. A world where anything is possible, if  
you only believe...  
\*sings last few lines\*

## SCENE 2 (CHARITY'S HOUSE)

(SILENCE. A close-up of YOUNG BARNUM)

**YOUNG CHARITY :** \*drinks tea, makes funny face, looks to young barnum and laugh \*

**YOUNG BARNUM:** \*laughs also\*

**MR. HALLETT:** Charity! Is this how we have taught you to behave? Like a person of no breeding? Come  
here! Look at your dress! How many times have I told you not to trouble the help!

**YOUNG BARNUM:** It's my fault sir, I make her laugh

**MR. HALLETT:** well thank you for your honesty \*slaps young barnum\* stayaway from my daughter.  
\*walks out with young charity\*

## SCENE 3 (OUTSIDE)

**YOUNG BARNUM:** How did you get out?

**YOUNG CHARIT:** I climbed out the window once father got into his Port. \*silence\*Father is sending me  
to finishing school. I don't know what my future will be.

**YOUNG BARNUM:** \*looks at her\* I do

(A million dreams music)

Barnum, 15 now, sits alone, writing a letter, with a single \* lantern on the table. His face is dirty, his  
clothes rags

\*continue singing\*

Charity, 14 and beautiful, sits at a moonlit window sill and \* opens the letter. She pulls out a pop-up  
origami: two faces \* in profile; a boy and a girl. As she unfolds it, the faces \* come together, as if kissing.  
She smiles to herself, charmed.

\*charity singing\*

MUSIC continues under. Barnum strides up the front walk of the Hallet's grand house -- scared but determined. He's an adult now, a younger version of the man we first met. As he steps onto the porch, the door is pulled open. Mr Hallet stands in the doorway, scowling, blocking his way. Barnum takes off his hat -- humbly dressed, but respectful.

**BARNUM:** Mr. Hallet, I know how I look to you, but you have my word, I will take care of your daughter.  
**Mr. Hallet:** she will be back. Sooner or later she will be tired of your life, of having nothing and she'll running back home.

**Barnum:** \*holds charity and leave\*

(Background music) (Sings a million dreams)(Dances)

#### **SCENE 4(WORK)**

Barnum hunches at a desk, punching buttons into a mechanical Burroughs adding machine, writing the results into a ledger. WIDER -- His is one desk in a vast office of Accountants, all crammed in tidy rows. A CACOPHONY of adding machines. It's as far from his youthful dreams as he could have imagined. A BOSS, 60s and well-dressed, walks out and waves his arms. Gradually, everyone stops working.

(Typing sounds)

\*The room goes silent. \*

**BOSS:** Gentlemen, I regret to say you're all dismissed. Company's gone bankrupt.

\*barnum pack his things up\*

#### **SCENE 5(HOME)**

Barnum enters, exhausted from work. He carries the pencil \* holder, and several large files. It's a cramped tenement. Barnum and Charity are in their 30s now. His daughters, CAROLINE, 7, and HELEN, 3, greet him with cries of happiness.

**CHARITY:** you're home early \*smiles\*

**BARNUM:** you have a notice \*gives the paper\*

**CHARITY:** I know you won't be able to last long that makes your life so exciting

**BARNUM:** This isn't the life I promised you.

**CHARITY:** I have everything I want right here with you.

**BARNUM:** What about that house we were going to fill -- with magic and wonder?

**CHARITY:** What do you call those two girls downstairs?

He looks at his wife, finally smiles. She's gotten through. Charity leans against his shoulder. Delicately, he ventures

**CHILDREN:** DADDYYYYY!!!

QUICK CUTS -- Barnum assembles a gift from scavenged office equipment. Charity and the Girls watch as he binds a candle to a spike, lights it, and places the pencil holder over the candle, onto the spike. Charity blows out a lantern. Suddenly, the room is only lit by a hundred points of light, emitted from holes. Barnum spins the pencil holder, and the points of light spin around the room. The Girls are dazzled.

**BARNUM:** Happy birthday, Caroline. It's a wishing machine.

**HELEN:** \*steps forward and whisper\* my wish is to marry Santa Claus

**BARNUM:** that's a good wish

**CAROLINE:** I wish for a pair of ballet slippers, so I can be a ballerina.

Barnum smiles, but he's flat broke. It rips his guts out.

Caroline turns her eyes on the lights above\*sings\* 'CAUSE EV'RY NIGHT I LIE IN BED \* THE BRIGHTEST COLORS FILL MY HEAD \* A MILLION DREAMS ARE KEEPIN' ME AWAKE

**CHILDREN:** *I think of what the world could be, A vision of the one I see, A million dreams is all its gonna take*

**BARNUM:** *a million dreams for the world we're gonna make*

#### **SCENE 6(BANK)**

Barnum sits opposite a BANK MANAGER.

**BANKER:** Mr. Barnum, this venture you propose is risky, if not downright bizarre. The bank is going to need substantial collateral

-Barnum puts a full set of legal documents on the desk.

**BARNUM:** I own the deed and title to every trading vessel in this flotilla.

\*The Banker looks at the documents, then at Barnum, impressed\*

The family gives fliers outside of their museum but then no one has the interest. When the night comes, Barnum think of an idea that will surely hook people's eyes

#### **SCENE 7(OUTSIDE MUSEUM)**

\*Barnum posted on the wall\*fliers everywhere\*the unique performers saw the fliers agreeing to the content\*

#### **SCENE8(THEATER)**

\*before the performance begin the poster of performers were posted\*

\*barnum sang the come alive\*

\*sings while everyone was preparing\*

\*end of the performance\*clap, cheer sound\*

#### **SCENE 9(MANSION)**

A beautiful tree-lined street. Barnum steps out of a ZEBRADRAWN CARRIAGE, then helps a blindfolded Charity out. Helen and Caroline jump out after them. Time has passed -- they are all better-dressed and more polished than they used to be

**BARNUM:** Right this way, m'lady.

**CHARITY:** I'm going to break my neck. \*laughs\*

Barnum removes the scarf. Charity is stunned to see the same MANSION that she and Barnum broke into as children.

**CHARITY:** This is the same--...?!

**BARNUM:** it is, come on let's go.

\*enters the mansion with the kids\*

.....

#### **(BAR)**

Barnum exits, pulling on his coat, and spots Phillip Carlyle standing under the marquis, beside a poster advertising the play that just ended: "THE DRUNKARD or THE FALLEN SAVED," a temperance movement drama that was the snob hit of 1857.

**BARNUM:** Excuse me, Mr. Carlyle? I believe you produced this play –

**PHILLIP:** yes I do indeed. Refunds are available at the box office.

**BARNUM:** \*laughs\* (offers his hand) P.T. Barnum.

**PHILLIP:** (shakes it vigorously) from the circus?

**BARNUM:** If we present legitimate entertainments, we can expand our appeal. Bring in the carriage trade. Go after the high-brows.

**PHILLIP:** Funny, you want to attract the snobs and I've spent my entire life wishing to get away from them. They are suffocating.

He downs his drink, feeling vaguely sorry for himself. Barnum smiles, leans back.

**PHILLIP:** I appreciate the offer, Mr. Barnum. But such an association could, at the very least, cost me my inheritance.

**BARNUM:** Oh, it'd cost you a lot more than that.

The pianist hits a chord, and Barnum starts to sing.

Phillip looks down at the flask in his hand, realizing Barnum \* is right. He's won over, but won't yet admit it. Barnum and \* Phillip end up on opposite sides of the piano, negotiating.

Phillip extends his hand.

**PHILLIP:** Sir. You have yourself a junior partner.

Barnum gives the hand a wry look, but doesn't shake it. He pours himself a drink, shoves a bottle in Phillip's hand.

**BARNUM:** What I have is an over-compensated apprentice.

They both toss back a last drink (Phillip from the bottle). Then turn and walk out of the club, arm in arm.  
END SONG.

## **SCENE 10(THEATER)**

They step off a ladder, onto a catwalk above the last row of bleachers. From here, you can see everything. The vast space is dark, though you can HEAR a packed house. SPOTLIGHTS sweep the room, tracking an acrobatic act. Phillip leans forward to see what's going on, when... ..The CROWD beneath them parts, and Anne comes swinging up from below, arms free. Her arc ends almost face to face with Phillip. Then gravity whips her back in the other direction. Phillip turns to Barnum. Barnum grins.

**PHILLIP:** Who was that?

LATER -- As another act, a daredevil HORSE RIDER, takes over, circling the ring, Anne disengages from her ribbons with W.D.'s help. Barnum steps up with Phillip.

**BARNUM:** Miss Anne Wheeler? I'd like to introduce my newest hire, Mr. Phillip Carlyle

Anne takes in Phillip with her eyes, then shakes his hand.

**ANNE:** And what's your act, Mr. Carlyle?

**PHILLIP:** I don't have an act –

**ANNE:** \* Everyone's got an act.

Instant chemistry. Anne, freed from her ribbons, smiles, \* flirty, and walks off. Phillip, smitten, turns to check out \* Anne. When he turns back, he finds W.D. glaring at him

### **SCENE 11(THEATER)**

A pub across from the museum. Barnum sits at the bar with Tom Thumb, Lettie, and O'Clancy, a stack of newspapers in front of them. He reads from Roth's review in the Tribune:

**BARNUM:** "... Barnum's reputation as the national clearinghouse for the grotesque remains firmly intact. How much longer will the public indulge this man's reckless forays into the unseemly depths of bad taste?" Can you believe he's reviewing us again?!

**LETTIE:** What do you care about Roth for? He's a prig and a snob.

**BARNUM:** Yes, and all the snobs in New York read him. He does their thinking for them.

Barnum throws the paper down, frustrated. Phillip bursts into the pub. Clearly excited.

**BARNUM:** Have you seen this?

**PHILLIP:** I have.

**BARNUM:** I thought I was paying you to class up the joint.

**PHILLIP:** I've been working on it. Everyone...?

He turns to the others, holds up a folded piece of paper.

**PHILLIP:** If you want society to accept you, do you start at the bottom? Or in the middle? No -- you start at the very top.

**BARNUM:** And what's the top?

He hands the paper to Barnum. It's a telegram. He reads:

**BARNUM:** "You are hereby invited to an audience with Her Royal Majesty, Victoria..." \* (looks up, stunned) Is this real?

**PHILLIP:** It took some doing, but I got us invited to England! To meet with the Queen! GASPS and CHEERS from the assembled Performers.

**LETTIE:** The Queen, huh? How much is she payin'?

Barnum stares at the telegram, a smile forming.

### **SCENE 11(ROYAL PALACE)**

Barnum enters with Tom, Lettie, Chang and Eng, and the Lord of Leeds, all five hundred pounds. Anne follows in her gown, with Phillip on one side, W.D. on the other. The place falls silent. Everyone stares as a path is cleared to... QUEEN VICTORIA, 30. Barnum and Tom, leading the way, slowly approach the seated queen. Beside her is a small KING CHARLES SPANIEL on a leash held by one of her courtiers.

**PHILLIP:** Your Majesty. It is in an honor to meet you. May I present Mr. Phineas T. Barnum.

**BARNUM:** I am honored, Your Highness.

**QUEEN VICTORIA:** The honor is mine, Mr. Barnum. And I have heard all about your little Colonel from my friends in America.

**TOM THUMB:** General, ma'am.

**QUEEN VICTORIA:** Forgive me. General. Oh My! You're even smaller than I expected.

**TOM THUMB:** You're not exactly reaching the top shelf yourself, sweetheart.

The assembled nobility GASP. Phillip holds his breath. The room remains silent until the Queen suddenly bursts into laughter. Everyone immediately joins in, relieved. The Queen's dog starts to BARK at Tom -- who barks right back. They growl and nip and tug at each other. The Queen throws her head back, laughing even harder at Tom's antics. Barnum and Phillip share a look of relief.

### SCENE 13

There is a small stir near the doors, as the crowd is hushed. HERALD Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Jenny Lind. GUESTS applaud as JENNY LIND enters. In her early 30's, she is a stunning Scandinavian beauty. Barnum turns to Phillip.

**BARNUM:** Who is that?

**PHILLIP:** Only the most famous singer in Europe.

**BARNUM:** Another singer, huh?

\*walks toward miss jenny\*

**PHILIP:** Miss Lind this is Mr. Barnum\*kisses her hand\*

**BARNUM:** Miss Lind. My name is P.T. Barnum. The pleasure is mine \*kisses hand\*

**JENNY:** From America. I've heard of you.

She smiles slyly -- suggesting what she's heard. He grins.

**BARNUM:** Well, if you heard of me all the way over here, I must be doing something right.

**JENNY:** (suggestive) Or else very wrong.

**BARNUM:** let me get to the point, I'd like to bring you to America.

That surprises her. She smiles at him.

**JENNY:** Is that a proposition?

**BARNUM:** Oh, no. Mrs. Barnum would be displeased. But I'd like to put you on tour there.

**JENNY:** Have you heard me sing?

**BARNUM:** No. And I look forward to it very much. But I see the way everyone in this room is looking at you. You outshine the Queen

herself. That's all I need to know.

**JENNY :**( intrigued) I've never been to America. I have to ask, Mr. Barnum, why me

Barnum thinks about it -- a moment of real reflection.

**BARNUM:** People come to my shows for the pleasure of being hoodwinked. Just once I'd like to give them something that can't be

faked. Something real.

\* Jenny smiles. \*

**JENNY:** Well... Honesty. I didn't expect that.

\* Barnum smiles back. He has her.\*

### SCENE 14(JENNY'S FIRST)

**BARNUM:** Ladies and gentlemen, I recently had the pleasure of hearing the most incredible—

(A spectacular circular theatre. Barnum stands on stage. He \* nods to Charity, Caroline and Helen, dressed to the

Nines.)...Most divine voice I have ever heard. Now I know that sounds like Barnum hype. But I have no doubt that tonight,

even the most joyless critics will be moved. May I present the Swedish Nightingale, Miss Jenny Lind.

A ten-piece orchestra starts to play. Jenny appears far upstage and walks quietly forward, a mirage coming into focus in a simple but stunning dress. There's an audible reaction to her beauty. Charity's grip on Caroline's hand tightens. Then Jenny sings.

MUSIC continues under. There's an air of excitement that only comes after a perfect show. Cheers continue as Jenny leaves the stage, followed by STAGEHANDS carrying BOUQUETS. She is met by Barnum, who looks at her, truly impressed.

\*claps everywhere\*

### SCENE 15(MEET)

**BARNUM:** I'd like you to meet my wife, Charity. And our girls, Caroline and Helen.

**JENNY:** A pleasure.

She offers Helen her hand -- to shake, or to kiss, Helen isn't sure. So she curtsies. Caroline steps forward, shyly.

**CAROLINE:** You have the most exquisite voice!

**JENNY:** Thank you, dear. Do you perform?

**CAROLINE:** Yes, I... I'm studying Ballet.

**BARNUM:** You are?!

**CAROLINE:** Of course I am.

\*Barnum turns to Charity and beams.\*

**BARNUM:** Of course she is.

**HELEN:** You look like a princess, ma'am.

**JENNY:** But you're the beautiful one.

The room is crammed with well-heeled ADMIRERS and bouquets of flowers. Barnum glad-hands people while Charity feigns interest. Jenny smiles politely, accepting accolades.

Barnum heard a knock and open the door. It is Lettie, Tom Thumb, O'Clancy, and all the rest of the oddities. They smile.

**LETTIE: Mr. B...** You think we could meet Miss Lind? Good Lord, that lady can sing!

\* Barnum wavers, looks back in the room -- at the Winthrops, Jenny, etc. He turns back. And makes the wrong choice...\*

**BARNUM:** It's a bit crowded right now, Lettie. Why don't you all come back later?

The Oddities are surprised and insulted. Before they can respond, Barnum has closed the door on them. Lettie sang "this is me" \*from close door to theater\*

### SCENE 16

**ANNE:** Mr. Barnum set a ticket for me. \*Takes the ticket\*I'm sorry I believe this is supposed to be one.

**PHILIP:** No, it is meant to be two\* looks at anne\* I'm willing to join if you would ask me to come.

**ANNE:** I've always wanted to come to theater

\*hands on Philip's shoulder\*\*went upstairs\*\*sees Philips parents\*

**FATHER:** Philip is that you?

**PHILIP:** mother, father this is anne wheeler

**FATHER:** Philip are you not ashamed seeing yourself with that poor woman?

\*anne walks out the seen\*

**PHILIP:** anne! Anne!\*faces his father\* how do you speak to her like that?

**MOTHER:** \*touches Philips hand\*you forget your place

**PHILIP:** my place? Mother this is my place and I want in more  
\*went to anne\*

#### **SCENE 17**

**PHILIP:** anne just please don't mind the people, why do you care about what they think?

**ANNE:** it's not just them, you never have somebody who look at you just like how your parents looked up me, the way everyone looked at us.

\*both sang the rewrite the stars

#### **SCENE 18**

**CHARITY:** First you brought a house just like my parents' house then meeting the queen then bringing jenny lind and my father to America, we will never be enough for you

**BARNUM:** I'm doing this for caroline and helen

**CHARITY:** Look around you, you have everything

**BARNUM:** You don't understand

**CHARITY:** I do

**BARNUM:** No, you don't understand! How could you? My father was treated like dirt, I was treated like dirt and my children will be.

**CHARITY:** You don't need to love you, just a few good people

**BARNUM:** I know that

#### **\*NEXTDAY\***

\*brings the baggage and leaves together with jenny\*

\*daughters run towards barnum\*

**BOTH:** DADDY!!! Daddy no!!!

(charity sang tightrope)

#### **SCENE 19**

**JENNY:** well mr. barnun, this... is \*flirty laugh\* to make your dreams come true \*cheers\*

**BARNUM:** I ahhhh... I should go. Ahh ahm I have come as a destruction

**JENN:** No..

**BARNUM:** I'm sorry, you should finish your tour without me

**JENNY:** What! You will be leaving? So that's it...

**BARNUM:** What do you mean?

**JENNY:** \*whisper s\*I'm just another one of your little act

\*walks out\*

**BARNUM:** Jenny

**JENNY:** I'm done

**BARNUM:** Jenny,jenny please you have to finish your tour

**JENNY:** That's the last time

**BARNUM:** It would ruin me

**JENNY:**\*sigh\*well, you where careless Mr. Barnum on yourself without your people

**BARNUM:** I have risked everything

**JENNY:** What? So did I and it seems we both risked\*left\*



## **SCENE 20 (THEATER)**

\*(Sang never be enough)

Jenny finds Barnum in the wings and summons him out. He resists but she is insistent. Finally he steps out and bows with her. She takes his hand and raises it with hers. A number of camera FLASHES go off from the photographers positioned in front of the stage. Jenny takes note of the photographers and then, suddenly grabs Barnum and kisses him full on the lips. In the darkness, the FLASHES continue. Barnum pulls back in shock. She smiles at him sadly

**BARNUM:** What was that?

**JENNY:** That was goodbye

## **SCENE 21**

The musical finale features most of the Oddities, including Tom, Lettie, Chang and Eng, and the Lord of Leeds. They are joined by Anne and some ACROBATS. They slowly become aware of a disturbance in the audience.

**PHILIP:** Thank you very much for coming! Tell your friends to come! Who enjoy themselves, you? Tell everyone that I'm inviting them in the circus, new acts everynight!

**PROTESTER:** Hey. Ring master!

**PHILIP:** Gentlemen... ganna ask you to leave

**PROTESTER:** This is our town son. We think you should leave, you and your freaks and your spooks

**PHILIP:** Sir, I will only ask you once

**PROTESTER:** Then what boy?

Challenged, looks to his confederates. In unison, they charge into the ring, attacking W.D. He flattens the first Protester with a right hook. The others jump him. W.D. takes them all on, but he's outnumbered. Phillip throws himself into the fight, pulling the Protestors off W.D. A melee breaks out, W.D. and Phillip putting up a good fight, but clearly outmatched. The AUDIENCE cries out and retreats from the ring, clutching children protectively. The show is a shambles. The Protesters have succeeded -- they shut the Circus down. Feeling triumphant, they pump their fists and head to the exit, leaving Phillip and W.D. battered but unbroken. They all retreat into --

Where the gang of Protesters suddenly stop, STARTLED to see: A platoon of CIRCUS PERFORMERS -- twenty strong at least, not \* just Oddities, but jugglers, acrobats. Standing at the front, glaring, are Lettie, Tom Thumb, O'Clancy, etc.

**LETTIE:** CHAAAAAAAARGEEEEEEE!!!

The Performers ATTACK. They outnumber the Protesters and, being circus performers, some of them are freakishly strong. In no time the gang is left in a pile on the floor.

He Protesters scramble and quickly retreat. At the door, a beaten Protester sees an oil lantern hanging on the wall. He picks it up, turns, and throws it spitefully onto a bed of feeding hay. The lantern breaks and the hay catches fire. It spreads to curtains. Suddenly, there are fires spreading everywhere. The Performers rush to try to put them out. The Protesters share a wicked grin, retreat into the night.

## **SCENE 22 TRAIN PLATFORM**

**\*SOUND OF TRAIN HORN, HORSE STEP, BELL\***

Barnum steps off the train, carrying suitcases. He looks around. No one greets him. Then the crowd parts, he sees Charity standing there. Caroline and Helen are with her. They look at him, tentative -- he's almost a stranger. He put down his suitcase, goes quickly to them and embraces her. The girls hug him too. He kisses her. She is surprised.

**DAUGHTERS:** DADDYYYYY!!! \* hugs their father\*

**BARNUM:** miss you, miss you. Wow you have grown up so much \*kisses his wife\*

**CHARITY:** So what made you come rushing home all of a sudden?

**BARNUM:** I missed you. She smiles slyly -- affectionate, exasperated, and suspicious.

**CHARITY:** That sounds an awful lot like humbug.

Suddenly, a FIRE WAGON races by. Another soon follows. Barnum turns, sees a young POLICEMAN running up the street.

**BARNUM:** what's going on?

Barnum turns to Charity and the Girls. He drops his suitcase and they all start to run.

## **SCENE 23**

The building is on fire. Flames and smoke pour from the windows. Barnum and Charity and the Girls arrive as just Anne and W.D. emerge from the building, helping usher out Lettie, Tom Thumb, Chang, Eng and the rest of the Oddities

**BARNUM:** you! Is everyone okay?

**PHILIP:** wheres anne?

**MAN:** Shes still inside!

**W.C:** no,no!!!

**BARNUM:** \*saw anne\* there she is!!!

Philip! Philip!

The family run towards barnum but then barnum just looked them and then rush towards the circus

**DAUGHTERS:** NOOOO, DADDY!

The circus has collapsed and everyone are in great fear and shocked

Charity, Caroline, Helen, Anne, W.D., and all of the Oddities watch the building in silence, as the flames devour it. Then, through the smoke, a figure... Barnum emerges carrying Phillip, unconscious, in his arms.

As soon as they are clear, Barnum collapses to his knees, lays Phillip on the ground. Anne runs to Phillip. Charity, Caroline, and Helen descend on Barnum, hugging him.

**BARNUM:** his taking a lot of smoke but his still breathing, come on

Rescuer has arrived, took Philip on the hospital\*

He stands up, turns. His family gathers around him, sombre. \* The Performers -- Oddities; Acrobats; Trainers -- Barnum's \* whole work family, gather around him as well. Together, they \* stand and watch as the building, his life's work, burns up.

**SCENE 24**

Phillip is laid into a hospital bed by two DOCTORS. He is unconscious, dressed in bandages. The room is large, with rows of beds. As the Doctors turn to leave, Anne steps forward, at his side, looks down, eyes full of tears.

\*ANNE sang rewrite the star chorus\*

Burnt debris blankets the property. Barnum surveys the smoking shell of his building. Barnum falls into a sitting \* position, spent, gazes at the damage around him, devastated. \* Behind him, a lone figure approaches down the empty street -- \* Roth. Roth arrives to find Barnum, dirty with soot, gazing \* at the ruins of his museum. Barnum glances up, darkly.

**BARNUM:** If you're here to gloat, I'd reconsider.

**Roth:** takes out a handkerchief and wipes down a charred wooden chair before sitting down beside Barnum.

**ROTH:** Police caught the folks who started the fire. Just thought you'd like to know.

\*Roth pulls out a flask, offers it. Barnum looks at him, wary.\*

**ROTH:** Come on. You look like you could use it.

\*Barnum relents, takes a swig. Hands it back. Roth smiles, takes another quick nip before he pockets the flask.\*

**ROTH:** You'll rebuild, I hope

\*Barnum looks at him, surprised\*

**BARNUM:** You hate the circus.

**ROTH:** I did, at first. It's everything a critic is supposed to hate -- big, obvious, enjoyable, fun... But when they started protesting? I had to reconsider. (Points to ruins) What was going on inside those four walls...? Was democracy at its finest? A celebration of humanity in every form -- big, small, bearded, whatever. And that scares people. That's why they burned you down. It may not be art, and it's definitely lowbrow. But it isn't humbug.

\* Barnum smiles, this is something he never expected to hear.\*

**BARNUM:** Thank God for Jenny's tour. I can borrow off those profits and rebuild --

**ROTH:** The tour? My God, you don't know...? \* Roth reaches into his bag and hands Barnum a morning paper.\* I'm sorry. I thought you knew...!

On the front page, a PHOTO of the kiss is framed by a heart, as lurid as any modern tabloid. The headline reads, "BARNUM SCANDAL! Jenny Lind Quits U.S. Tour! Sails Today for Sweden!"

## SCENE 25

**BARNUM:** thank god you're her. I...

**CHARITY:** I don't want to talk to you

**BARNUM:** Come on, Charity. Nothing happened.

\*As he gets close, she throws the afternoon paper at him.\*

**CHARITY:** Oh, something happened. It's on the front page of every paper in New York.

**BARNUM:** She orchestrated the photo so she could quit the tour. I'm not in love with her.

**CHARITY:** Of course you're not! Not with her! Not with me! Not with anyone! Just you and your show.

**BARNUM:** Where are you going?

**CHARITY:** I'm going home. They evicted us this morning. Just showed up and said our home was no longer ours.

**BARNUM:** I know. I just came from the bank. She starts to cry. Barnum is stricken to see her so hurt.

**CHARITY:** Why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you talk to me? Before risking everything?

**BARNUM:** Charity, I will get the house back--...

**CHARITY:** No! Please...! No more promises...! (Shakes her head) I married you. Not the house. Not the money. You. You saw the magic in the world. I wanted to live in that world with you. You used to think you weren't enough for me. Remember? Now we're not enough for you. Nothing is. She turns and enters the house, slams the door.

Barnum stares, for once he has nothing to say.

## SCENE 26

Barnum sits alone at the bar, his hat in front of him beside his drink. He stares at mementoes on the wall, reminders of everything he's lost. The door opens and we see Tom Thumb.

**TOM THUMB:** I figured you'd end up here.

He climbs straight onto the bar and walks down it toward Barnum, carrying the "Prince of Humbug" crown in his hand.

Barnum looks down the bar and sees Lettie, Chang and Eng, Lord of Leeds, and other performers filing in. They are smiling and relieved, happy to see Barnum. Tom turns back.

**BARNUM:** If you've come to get paid, I'm sorry. The money's gone. All of it. **TOM**

**LETTIE:** oww shut up barnum. You just don't get it. Our own mother is pushing us out then you pull as out on the shadows and now you're giving up on us too. Maybe you are a fraud but you gave as a real family.

\*barnum sang from now on\*

## SCENE 27

The dim, quiet hospital room. Curtains drawn. Phillip lies in bed, still unconscious. Anne sits next to him, bent over with exhaustion, head bowed. But still holding his hand. In the background, Doctors and Nurses quietly do their rounds. CLOSE ON -- His hand. Gently, it twitches, grasping hers. She raises her head, disbelieving. She clutches his hand, squeezing... He stirs. Then his eyes open. He sees her.

**PHILLIP:** You're here. A tear falls down her cheek.

**ANNE:** "Here" is where I belong.

They share a tearful smile. A passing NURSE notices he is awake and waves to others. A handful of Doctors and Nurses gather at the foot of the bed. She leans in and kisses him on the lips, unafraid and \* unashamed. He wraps his arms around her, kissing her back.

(The MUSIC rises briefly, but continues UNDER)

## SCENE 28

Barnum strides up the front walk, in a mirror of the elopement scene. As he steps onto the porch, Mr. Hallett opens the front door, looks at Barnum with withering disdain.

**BARNUM:** Mr. Hallett, it seems I am the penniless bum you always said I was. But I am in love with your daughter, and if you don't mind, I like to see my wife.

**MR. HALLETT:** She's not here.

**CAROLINE:** She's at the beach!

They turn. Caroline and Helen are at the top of the stairs. \* He smiles. They smile back.

## SCENE 29

Silence. Charity gazes out at the wintry surf. She looks sad, lost, lonely. The beach is familiar, it's where they played as kids. Then something catches her eye. She turns. In the distance, Barnum walks towards her.

**BARNUM:** I have brought hardship on myself, and visited pain upon those I cherish most dearly. You warned me of my folly, and I would not listen. MUSIC starts under. He keeps his eyes averted, downcast. I wanted to be better than who I was

**CHARITY:** I never wanted anything but you. The man \* I fell in love with.

Barnum's eyes fill with tears. He's got her back.

**BARNUM:** That is the man I will be. From now on \* They kiss\*

### SCENE 30

**PHILLIP:** Did they say no?

Barnum looks up to see Phillip, now fully recovered, joining him. Barnum offers a small smile, glad to see him.

**BARNUM:** Emphatically. Repeatedly. I don't think there's a single sucker in this country that I can fool into giving me money anymore.

**PHILLIP:** You know, Barnum? When I first met you, I had an inheritance. I had acclaim. I had invitations to every party in town. And now, thanks to you, that's gone. All that's left now is friendship, my love with Anne, and work I adore. So thanks a lot, Barnum. (Turning serious) You brought joy into my life, where there was none before. It's the one thing you're good at.

**BARNUM:** Partners?

Barnum takes his hand, and they shake.

**PHILLIP:** You know it's not enough to buy a new building...

**BARNUM:** Oh, we don't need a building! I can get land down by the docks for nothing! What we really need is a tent! A big one! Colorful and festive! That will make you stop and want to see what's inside...!

The glorious tent, the first, is pitched and ready to go. The attractions are all here, as well as dozens of animals and TRAINERS, and other CREW. The anticipation is palpable. The sun sets and dozens of CARBON ARC LAMPS blast on, bathing the circus in a warm glow.

\*Sang greatest show\* went to Philip\*

**BARNUM:** this is for you \*gives the hat to Philip\*

**PHILIP:** What will you be doing?

**BARNUM:** Watching my girls grow up

We return to Barnum's reverie from the opening of the movie: Barnum gazes at the crowd, taking in the joy and excitement \* all around him. SOUND FADES. In a wistful moment, he sings \* to himself about the long road it took to get here.

Barnum watches proudly as Phillip puts on his top hat, then steps into the rings -- the new Ringmaster. SOUND returns. \* Barnum checks his pocket watch, then turns. Eunice, the elephant, is held by a Trainer at the edge of the tent.

The Big Top, lit within, stands on the Brooklyn shore. MUSIC plays UNDER as we hear the CROWD APPLAUD inside the tent. We CRANE UP, rising high, as FIREWORKS explode across sky, we CIRCLE AROUND to SEE the across the river is the contemporary skyline of Manhattan. Barnum's legacy still stands -- more than a century later -- as The Greatest Show On Earth.